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THE MAN JESUS

BY MARY AUSTIN

CHAPTER V

OF what happened to the twelve on their tour, who heard and who reviled them, there is not so much as a tradition. They went forth to do as they saw Jesus doing, to teach, to heal and to cast out devils; at no point was the business of the disciple distinguished from that of the Master. It was evident from the instruction they received that they were not to go far nor to remain long; they came again and told all that they had done.

Of what happened to Jesus in the interim, even less is known—unless we place in this period some incidents not otherwise located except by the logic of circumstance. Of these, the most significant was the supper at the house of a Pharisee. It seems more probable that after his return from the mountain, rid of his immediate following—men of no very great refinement of manner, if the truth must be told—certain of the Pharisees, who had been attracted by his doctrine but repelled by his want of conformity, would again attempt to put themselves in sympathy with the prophet.

One did so attempt by inviting him to his house for a meal; and while it was in progress, possibly in the open court, for it was now full summer, the guests reclining in the Roman manner, there came a woman into the room and stood behind the Master. She stood there weeping in the dusk; her tears fell upon his feet and she wiped them with her hair. They could see her in the flare of the tall lamps, wiping his feet and kissing them, and presently the air of the place began to be filled with perfume, delicate and costly. Then the Pharisee said in his heart, for he knew her, "This man, if he were a prophet"—for he was by no means sure—"would have known . . . what manner of woman this is . . . for she is a sinner." But though it was his own house, he dared not be the first to speak of it.

He watched for some movement of withdrawal on the part of his guest from the defiling presence, but instead he found himself addressed:

"Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee."

"Master, say on."

Said Jesus: "There was a certain creditor which had two debt-

ors : the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most ? ”

“ I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.” Simon was ready enough with the answer, but he saw not where the question tended.

In the beginning he had omitted those attentions which were due an honored guest, fearing, perhaps, to commit himself too much. The man *might* be a prophet, in which case it were well to have entertained him, but still—— And now his guest was pointing out to him that it was the woman who had supplied the missing hospitality, the ceremonial washing, the kiss of welcome, the anointing.

“ Wherefore,” said the Master, “ her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she loved much : but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” And to the woman he said, “ Thy sins are forgiven. Go in peace.” This was the way he took to turn the very despisings of his adversaries to advantage in the spread of his doctrine. It was also one of the things that was remembered against him.

How else he spent the time of his disciples’ absence cannot be so much as guessed, unless he spent a part of it in his mother’s house at Nazareth. The last we hear of his family was on the occasion of their visit to him at Capernaum, when, if he received them at all, it was not until after they had been made to feel that their claim upon him was less than that of more ardent believers. And the next we hear is that Mary, his mother, and possibly a brother, are in the group that followed him up to Jerusalem. James was martyred for his sake, and the grandsons of Jude confessed him as Christ before the Emperor Domitian.

There must have intervened between these some occasion on which his family had leisure to hear and be converted by him, and this is the only unaccounted-for interval of his ministry.

It would probably have been during this period of retirement that the news reached him of how the daughter of Herodias had danced the head of John the Baptist off his shoulders and on to a silver charger, otherwise there would have been some public question raised by it. And if he were not where I suppose him, then he was more than likely where we read that he was often to be found, apart in the hills and desert places at prayer.

It is not because the soul of man is less importunate, but only because it is immensely more fluent than the physical habit, that his religious practices take their cast from his daily living. Ordinarily, the spirit accommodates itself to trifles of custom and expedient as a stream to the pebbles in its bed, flowing over and around them ; it is only in freshets that they are carried utterly away. The essential teachings of the man Joshua ben Joseph cut a wide, free channel for the spiritual aspirations of the time ; but his private religious observances were largely shaped by contemporaneous Hebrew practice.

The pagan carried his gods with him. Every place in which he

elected to set up his altars became sacred, fit for worship or expiation; but to the Jew there was but one holy place, even the mount of Jerusalem. Only between the horns of the great altar could sacrifice be acceptably made. But ever since the Captivity of Babylon there had been, in whatever place Jews of the dispersion were congregated, meeting houses where the books of the Law were kept and where matters pertaining to their religion could be discussed. These synagogues in the time of Jesus, when the temple worship was still the dominant feature of Hebraism, had even less of sanctity than attaches to them since the destruction of Jerusalem; they were used only on Sabbaths and commemorative occasions. All the treasures of religious association were still with the grass and the rain, the wild hills and the swelling of Jordan. Wealthy Jews had closets for personal devotions, rooms dedicated to reading and meditation, little kiosks on the house-tops, looking toward Jerusalem; but in the crowded warrens of the poor there were no such privacies. Any man among them subject to visitation of the spirit must have turned instinctively toward those places where of old God had visited Abraham, Elijah and Isaiah. It is impossible not to conclude that to the circumstances of great light and space in which he received it, as well as to the compulsory co-operations and interdependence of poverty from which he came, we owe the spacious social character of the teaching of Jesus.

Above the plain of Gennesaret lie the orchards; first the olives with the vines between; above the olives the figs; above the figs the apricots, almonds, walnuts. Beyond the orchards the wild jungle begins: oak and thorn and terebinth; at last the "trees of God," spired fir and fan-spread cedar. Here a charcoal burner's hut would have sheltered him, or one of these low stone sheds used by the shepherds at lambing time. At this latitude the sky retains its blueness until midnight; the stars are not pricked in on one plane, but draw the eye to the barred door of space. A man praying here all night on one of these open hill fronts might think he heard them swinging to their stations; might hear without any fancying the heavy surge of the Mediterranean roll up along the western buttress of the Bridge. At dawn the fishing fleet would break out of the lake towns like doves out of a dove-cote, and caravans, starting early to avoid the heat of the day, begin to crawl along. At hours such as this God flowed into him, filled and over-filled him.

And with all his being so filled and foaming with the new wine of his gospel, he retained the shape he had from the potter.

He was a small-town man, and no world-builder. He preached the Kingdom of God, knowing God for a spirit and having an increasing realization of the Kingdom as a state of being. But he had no program. He followed the inward voice, and followed it instinctively, with the freedom of a river in its natural channel, with no fretting of the flesh. But where the voice left him uninformed he was simply a man from Nazareth; his social outlook was the outlook of a villager.

All the great prophets of Israel had come out of the wilderness; their words were full of the terrible things—thunders, earthquakes, fire on the mountains. But the words of Jesus are all of the small town—the candle and the bushel, the housewife's measure of yeast, the children playing in the street. The rich he knew only as the poor and the oppressed know them; the kings of his parables were the kings of fairy tale and legend; such rulers and potentates as make the stock of the village story-teller. His very way of speaking was a folk-way: the pithy sentence, the pregnant figure. He saw God reflected in every surface of the common life, and taught in parables which are, after all, but a perfected form of the quizzes and riddles dear to the unlettered wit. That is why so many of them are remembered, while his profounder sayings escaped his audience. It is evident from the form of these, blunted as they are by re-translation, that they were many of them cast in the matched and balanced sentences of Hebrew verse, which accounts in part for their easy retention.

He was a man wise in life, but unlearned. He read no books but the scriptures; wrote nothing; took the folk-way of transmitting his teaching from mouth to mouth, and trusted God for the increase; and he had the folk-way in his profoundest speech, of identifying himself with the Power that used him. He dramatized all his relations to the Invisible. And with it all he was a Jew of the circumcision. He grew up beyond Judaism as a stalk of grain grows from its sheath, but never out of it. Always, to his death, it was there about the roots of his life. At Capernaum, when the centurion had come to him, touching the illness of his servant, it had been thought necessary to explain that the soldier had been good to the Jews and had built them a synagogue. In the sending of his disciples he had explicitly directed them not to go into Samaria. His final illumination on this point he took with that extraordinary spiritual efficiency which distinguished him; equally with John the Baptist, he understood that many should come in from strange lands and sit down with the children of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. But the stalk had not yet overtopped its sheath when the returning twelve met him at the appointed rendezvous, which was probably Capernaum.

From what follows, one judges that the teaching of the disciples must have been attended with a measure of success. From this time on, until he deliberately disappointed it, public expectation ran high. What with the coming and the going, Jesus and the twelve were so beset that they found it necessary to withdraw some little distance out of the city along the lake shore; but the people marked where they went, and, outrunning the boat, gathered about them again as sheep about a shepherd. Here, after he had preached to them, occurred one of those ebullitions of religious excitement which gave rise to the incident known as the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Popular enthusiasm is an excellent medium for miracle tales to ripen in. What probably happened was that the multitude were so fired by hope of

the Kingdom that they forgot their hunger, and hung about until Jesus, having first dismissed his disciples toward Bethsaida upon the ship, sent them away. It was the plan, no doubt, to rejoin the twelve after he had refreshed himself on the mountain, as his custom was after any notable effort, by deep draughts of prayer. And along in the fourth watch of the night, his disciples, being on the sea, and the moon shining, saw him come walking on the water as though he would have passed them. But they, thinking him a spirit, cried out in alarm until he spoke to them and came into the ship and comforted them. So Mark sets down what he recalled of what Peter told him. There was an earlier incident still of the crossing of this same lake, on the night before the healing of the demoniac, which led to their being avoided by the cities of Gadara. On that occasion, a storm arose—one of those sudden flaws of wind whirling down from Hermon to be sucked into the Rift of Jordan. They would spring up all in an instant, beating the lake from jade to blue and silver, and then white with spume, and as suddenly die away again. But while the clumsy fishing craft labored in the teeth of it, Jesus slept until the boatmen, at the last gasp of their strength and skill, cried to him, "Lord, save us: we perish." Immediately, when he was awakened, he said, "Peace, be still," which to their troubled sense seemed to be addressed to the wind and the sea, for immediately the wind fell off and the ship righted. All of which can be explained away by anybody who finds himself endowed with the kind of mind which demands it. Did Peter really tell Mark that Jesus walked on the water or that he walked *along* it; along the shallow tideless beach so lost in meditation that it was not until they called him from the boat anchored a few feet off shore that he was aware of them? Had he been there all the night walking by the still waters, instead of on the mountain, where they supposed him? Peter should have known; but certainly *if* he knew, it took more than a miracle of walking on the water to keep Peter faithful at the expense of his own comfort. After all, what a miracle needs for its acceptance is demonstration rather than argument. We believe the miracles of healing, because we have known of cures being accomplished in our own day, and we do not believe in walking on the water because it is not done among our acquaintances. Such incidents are told of all prophets, as a symbol of the extension of man's powers over fields felt to be within his province, but as yet beyond his capacity.

What actually did happen was that the ship, instead of making port at Bethsaida, as had been planned, was blown out of its course back to the coast of Gennesaret. Here the very thing that Jesus had sought to avoid at Capernaum awaited him. He was immediately recognized and beset by the sick borne in litters, and by throngs struggling only for the touch of his garments. Many that touched him were made whole by the faith that was in them; but it is notable here that he is not said to have healed anybody purposefully. From this

time forth he showed a tendency deliberately to avoid the work of healing as an impediment to his preaching career.

There is a hint in the gospel narrative that at this juncture, when his popularity in the thickly populated plain of Gennesaret had reached its height, there was a tentative attempt to put him at the head of some sort of organized revolution, an attempt which he evaded. This would account for several things that followed in the interim between the return of the twelve and the journey up to Jerusalem. It accounts for the falling away of the disappointed populace; for the secrecy which was maintained as to his movements afterward. He might have wished to avoid another popular demonstration, so uncomprehending; and his frequent trips across the border of Galilee might easily have been to escape the attention of Herod, who at this time certainly had heard of him and must have begun to wonder if this might not be John the Baptist come to life again to vex him.

About this time we read of Pharisees coming all the way from Jerusalem to see and question. They found for their first item that he and his disciples ate with unwashed hands—that is to say, that they omitted the ceremonial symbol of cleansing before meat. Attempting a rebuke, they found themselves rebuked in turn, and that roundly, convicted of lip service, of hypocrisy, of neglecting the commandments of God in favor of their traditions; making clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but remaining inwardly full of ravening and wickedness. He cried woe unto them for the titheing of mint and cummin and passing over the judgment and the love of God; woe for that they loved the chief seats in the synagogue and greetings in the market. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.” So are they who are under the influences of Pharisees defiled by unsuspected corruption.

And one of the lawyers—those whose business it was to draw out of the scriptures interpretations to suit the exigencies of his clients—said: “Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.” And Jesus, answering, said:

“Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! . . . for ye build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.” With much more in the same strain, to the effect that the blood of all the prophets should be required of their generation. “For,” said he—referring to their method of distorting the scriptures to their advantage—“ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves”—into the understanding of God, he meant—“and them that were entering in ye hindered.”

Then he called the people to him, and deliberately tore across the whole fabric of levitical cleansing which held the theory and practice of Pharisaism together. Once for all he rid his name-people of the accumulated tradition which reduced the process of daily living to a formula in the effort to avoid defiling or being defiled. “There is

nothing from without a man," taught Jesus, "that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him . . . for out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts . . . thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness . . . all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

It was a pronouncement which had effects far-reaching in the organization of his followers after his death, and carried them beyond what Jesus himself found necessary; it became, in fact, the door through which the gospel passed to the Gentiles.

But he had struck at a very tender part in the armor of Pharisaical respectability; and from this time on he became the special mark of their animosity, seeking always to provoke him to the point at which the law might take hold of him.

Leaving Bethsaida, he is heard of in parts of Dalmanutha and in the borders of Magadan. He journeyed to Tyre and Sidon. Here he was in a region predominately Gentile, and until his return from Cæsarea-Philippi out of the jurisdiction of Herod. He went unrecognized, for the most part, and undeclared; but a man so marked as Jesus, attended by twelve, who pay him the deepest attention and reverence, cannot always be hid. Near Dalmanutha, Pharisees came forth again, this time demanding a sign. His disciples, being of the masses and distrusting all aristocracies, either of manners or morals, thought they came to tempt him; but Jesus understood them better. His scorn licked them like a flame: "Hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"—which showed that he had been reading them himself to some purpose; but to their wicked and adulterous generation no sign should be given, save the sign of the prophet, Jonas; the sign of their own degeneracy, which called for a signal handling from God. On two or three occasions during this journey compassion broke down his reluctance to heal, though more than ordinary precautions were taken to prevent the cure from being known. It is notable that on these occasions, lacking the flux of a popular belief in him, he sometimes reinforced his method by symbolic touchings and an application to the eyeballs of the blind.

On his journey into Tyre and Sidon, one incident preserved to us shows the gradual widening of his mind to the world outside of Jewry. In one of the cities where he concealed himself he was recognized by a Syrophenician woman, who would have had him cast forth a devil out of her daughter. "But," said Jesus, "let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs." There spoke the Nazarene and the Hebrew, thinking of the chosen people. "Yea, Lord," the woman answered him in his own figure: "yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." And the answer pleased him; for though, as in the case of the centurion, he had not found such faith in Israel, he honored it when he found it.

They would have been a month or two at this business, holding on until late in November, if, as I think, it was the coming of the early rains which turned them east and south from Cæsarea-Philippi. They passed over Ephraim; on the plains of Phoenecia they smelled the sea. Toward Sidon they heard it pounding; saw between the low coast hills its white hands cast up. Hereabout they struck into the great coast road passing between Surrepta and Sidon, followed it as far as the gorge of Litany, perhaps—for it is not stated that they entered into either of the cities—and, climbing the sharp comb of hills between that and the upper Jordan, dropped down to Cæsarea-Philippi. For the most part it was pleasant going, past high, well-watered valleys and woods of maple, oak and bay. In the neighborhood of cities more Roman than Galilee they saw instruments of ignominious execution set up, and those melancholy processions, the criminal bearing his cross whipped forth by the soldiery, and following afar off the rabble, curious and scoffing.

They would put in a while at sequestered villages, preaching, perhaps, to such select few as were able to hear the Word, and then to the road again, where they slept at ancient khans, at shepherds' huts, and many a night all open to the stars. They ate such food as they bought at the wayside: rough, wild figs of the sycamore, and parched grain gleaned in the fields. They would sit, Eastern fashion, on the ground; and each making his little fire of the stalks, and threshing out the scorched ear in the hand, they would wash down the half-cooked grain with wine from a goat-skin bottle, while they talked of things pertaining to the Kingdom. At the end of the long twilight there would come a moment when, with heads bowed and covered, there ran a reverent murmur about the camp—*Hear, O Israel, the Lord the God is one Lord* . . . the immemorial declaration of the Shema.

CHAPTER VI

Art has done too much for Jesus, in painting him forever tried, scourged; forever a-dying. He was not only a man of the small towns, but of the hills, the open road. He is seen at his best here, striding a little ahead of his companions, bronzed, hardy, the turban off to catch the mountain coolness, the long hair blown backward from the rapt countenance; and over him a higher heaven than had yet lifted above man. Of the twelve or fourteen months which scholars allow to his ministry, how much of it was spent out of cover! At the preaching of John in the Rift of Jordan, on the mount of the Wilderness, in the hills back of Gennesaret, on the road to Cæsarea-Philippi; sleeping under the oaks at Gethsemane. Nothing else accounts so readily for his preoccupation with the natural rather than the institutional relations of men.

It was in this fashion that he came to Philip's handsome capital.

Philip the Tetrarch was as much of a Jew as a brother of Herod Antipas could be, and Perea was a district counted to Israel, though its influences were largely Greek. The citadel, from its rocky promontory, overlooked the wheat fields and mulberry orchards of the upper Jordan. Sacred to Pan was the very source and spring of Israel's sacred river, rushing from its basalt cave amid thickets of wild rose and honeysuckle and oleander. Hereabouts he had an altar. It is not recorded that Jesus entered Cæsarea-Philippi, but he remained in the vicinity long enough to be recognized and sought for healing, and long enough for the great change which had been foreshadowed in the character of his ministry to come to full development. It was here that Jesus put to the twelve a question which must have been shaping in his own mind ever since the early summer when John had first put it to him by the mouth of two of his own disciples :

“ Whom do men say that I am ? ”

And they answered him, “ Some say that thou art John the Baptist : some, Elias ; and others . . . one of the prophets.” For it was always in the minds of Israel that the True-Speaking could pass in and out of Life and come again. Jesus held them steadily to the question :

“ But whom say ye that I am ? ” And Peter, the impetuous, burst out with the faith that burned in him :

“ Thou art the Christ.”

Then said Jesus, “ Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven.”

It must have been here, and by the help of what he accepted as a revelation on the part of his disciples, that Jesus settled for himself much that must have seemed difficult and perplexing in his own experience. He had begun the preaching of the Kingdom of God at hand as a joyous certainty, a common heritage of the time, his only by a short priority of announcement. Feeling his knowledge of these things but a small part of what might be gathered up by any sincere soul who addressed himself to such discovery, he had come, as do all prophets and poets, to see it looked upon with suspicion by the multitude, a strange and singular thing, misunderstood and misrated.

As his revelation increased in him, together with his knowledge of the want of it in others, he saw, even between himself and his chosen intimates, a gulf immeasurable. It is at this point that genius falters. Sometimes, in sheer terror of being alone with its message, it fails altogether, or weakly turns back to seek, in human relations, a surcease of strangeness. But Jesus, finding himself so much in advance of his time that twenty centuries have scarcely caught up with him, found himself unaffrighted because not wholly without direction. Woven out of the faith of his race by a long line of prophets, the mantle of Messiahship waited for him who could fulfill it. It cannot be

said that at any time, until the very last day of his life, Jesus openly assumed it; but from this time forth he went clothed in the certainty of harmony between himself and the expectation of the ages. Though his time rejected him, he became a part of all times, inasmuch as he was a figure of prophecy. The feeling of being prepared for and expected, satisfied, for the Man of Nazareth, that sense of *belonging*, the hunger for which frets great souls to their undoing.

That the incident stood, both in his mind and that of his disciples, for a definitely changed relationship appears at once. When he had charged them that they should make none of these things known, he began to teach them how it was that he should go up to Jerusalem and what things he should suffer there. Certainly he must have carried these things in his mind for some time before he spoke of them, finding no way to reconcile them with his first joyous prevision of the Kingdom until he had accepted himself in the light of a fulfillment of prophecy. That his disciples found them utterly irreconcilable with any conception they had of him appears from Peter's hasty, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." But even Peter, reminded in his turn that he savored the things of men rather than of God, could hardly have understood what followed. For Jesus, calling the people to him, and his disciples also, said: "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul . . . ?"

Other things he said which, as they afterward recalled, referred more explicitly to the fate which was even then preparing for him. But it seems hardly possible it could have been clearly indicated or at all understood, for when the blow fell it found them wholly unprepared. In the light of what occurred later they harked back to interpret what he had said. At the time, other things better remembered drove it from their minds.

Some days after Peter's ready declaration, Jesus took him, together with James and John, high and apart on the mountain, for one of those sessions of silent prayer to which he owed his spiritual sustenance. Mount Hermon draws up out of the plain of the upper Jordan as the roots of a great oak lift out of the ground. The land is filled with the sound of running waters; full-born rivers leap from limestone caves and go roaring toward the Rift. The shrub is close-leaved here; at intervals great trees stand up; they reach the borders of perpetual snows.

On this occasion the little company must have climbed up beyond the tree line into the region of the stony waste before Jesus drew aside for his hour of communion. Wearied sooner at their own devotions, humbly his disciples watched him. While he prayed they saw the fashion of his countenance change, grow white and shining, and a

bright cloud overshadowed them. These were very simple souls to whom undreamed of things may happen. While Jesus was wrapt from himself did a white flash of his burning spirit strike across to them? Such things are possible. Or was it the alpine glow, that most transcendent of all the visible manifestations of God, flooding down from Hermon, touching all things with its divine transfiguration? They were fishermen of the low lake region, to whom the stained air, laving the peaks of the mountains, was as strange as splendid. It spoke to them, as all beauty of nature speaks to the devout, of God. Bathed in it, they saw their Messiah, as it became all true Jews to see him, radiant between the Law and the Prophets, in the figures of Moses and Elias.

Coming down from the heights, touched with awe of the celestial wonder, they ventured a timid question. "Why," said they, "do the scribes say that Elias should come first?" For if this was truly the Christ of prophecy there wanted somewhat to the fulfillment.

Said Jesus, "Elias is already come, but they knew him not and did unto him whatsoever they listed." By which they understood him to refer to John the Baptist. More is reported of the same character, but all too much colored by what happened in the interval between the writing and the recording to be veridical. It is enough, however, to define the path by which their thoughts traveled to the idea of Jesus and his teaching which finally possessed them.

There was a longer way still, in which they were to reconcile the person of the crucified carpenter with the glorious figure of the Messiah limned upon the Hebrew consciousness; but from this time forth we see Jesus held to the perfect poise by the knowledge of what God expected of him. He was not the first man nor the last to perish for the Word; but this was unique in him: that he never doubted nor repented. And if he saw in himself the fulfillment of prophecy, the Anointed One of Israel, who shall gainsay him? If he was not the Messiah the Jews expected, he was at least the only one they ever had.

And if not the Messiah of expectation, how then did he succeed in fulfilling the prophecy without satisfying the dream? His message he knew to be Messianic, but that he himself fell short, in some particulars, of the long-cherished ideal seems to be indicated in the last clause of the message he sent to John: "Blessed is he that finds no occasion of stumbling in me." Here we see the man from Nazareth imposing his levitical training on the prophet. Thus and so, the Messiah was to come; and yet here was the saving Word delivered in quite other ways.

The one feature irreconcilable between the inheritance and the revelation of Jesus was the establishment of the Kingdom. This was to be the work of the Messiah; and it is probable that when Jesus began to preach his early coming—before they had gone through the cities of Israel—he was thinking of a person quite apart from himself. The growth of the idea that he himself was the fulfillment of

prophecy was slow in him; it did not reach him much in advance of the certainty that if he were to restore the Kingdom to Israel, it was not to be in his own time and his own flesh. He was to prepare for it by revealing the true nature of the Father and establishing kinship between God and man. He was to reorganize the thoughts and affections of men in the Spirit and in Love. But more and more as he felt on all sides the pressure of Roman empire, of established governmental and economic systems, he realized the necessity of breaking up the mould of society, of pouring its fluid stuff into lines more in conformity with his revelation of Brotherhood in man. To speak in our own tongue, Jesus accepted the idea of social revolution without any clear notion of how it was to be accomplished. The entrance of the individual into the Kingdom was a matter of personal spiritual regeneration to which Jesus held the key. The setting up of the great commandment as a human institution lay in a region beyond the reach of his most poignant revelation.

But again, this was to be the work of the Messiah, and if Jesus were the Christ, then his work, somehow, in some fashion. And Jesus was to die. Of this he seems to have been certain from Cæsarea-Philippi forward; intimations of his end thickened as the time drew on. Casting about for the solution of these apparently irreconcilable conditions, he fixed upon the common belief in the return of the prophets. How readily Israel could accept such passage in and out of death is seen in their question about John the Baptist. John was Elias and Jesus was John come again. And if Jesus were Christ, why should not a second coming, not in the flesh, but with Power, show forth the wonders that the first had missed? In some such fashion the man from Nazareth worked out his uncompleted revelation.

Something had been accomplished by the temporary withdrawal of Jesus from the cities of Gennesaret. Once for all he had cleared himself from any movement which had for its objective the taking of the Kingdom of Heaven by violence. His work of healing was definitely relegated to a secondary place. Disappointed of this transitory hope, the rabble fell away, but many sincere souls still resorted to him.

One phrase from an incident at Cæsarea-Philippi lights up for us, as by a spark struck from a common experience, the state of mind of the devout of Israel: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." It was the cry that had burst, with tears, from the father of the dumb demoniac whom the disciple could not heal. Coming down from the mount of transfiguration, he had found a crowd gathered about the remnant of his disciples, and in their midst the man begging relief for his son. It was not until the Master accosted him with the customary formula, "Believest thou that I can do this thing?" that the deep-seated doubt came to the surface in that cry. So Israel, unhealed by all its prophets, voiced its doubt and its desire. Upon this cry the common faith tossed to and fro, rallied, broke and scattered, came to fulfillment at last in martyrdom long after he had passed. There

were moments when it shook its shadow over the surface of his mood. He was impatient with the incompetence of his disciples: "Faithless generation, how long shall I suffer you!" He pronounced woe on Chorazin and Bethsaida. At times a wistful humanness broke through: "Can it be that a prophet shall perish from Jerusalem!"

Not that there wanted occasions to try the patience of the teacher. No sooner had the disciples been given leave to think of Jesus as the Messiah, than they were found, on the way back from Cæsarea-Philippi, in fact, disputing who should be greatest. A man discovered casting out devils in the name of Jesus was forbid by them because he was not of their following. To both of these, especially to the later instance of the independent spread of his teachings during his life, Jesus made answer and illustration so unequivocal that it is a mystery how his name-people have so long avoided both. "For whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water in my name hath done it unto me," he said, touching the question of unauthorized healing, and left them in no doubt as to the quality of their offense against "one of these lesser ones who believe in me." But the millstone hangs still about the neck of the church because of what it has done to those who take the name of Jesus in some fashion other than their own.

Incidents such as these, showing how far even his chosen twelve were from comprehending him, contributed to the sense of disappointment voiced in his invective against the cities of Galilee . . . "for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes." It had its part in the urge which drove him, knowing what awaited him there, to set his face steadily toward Jerusalem.

This would have been two or three months before Passover—nearer, if we accept the incident of the temple tax which was collected in Capernaum. The rains would have been well on, the winter wheat was up, and of his townspeople, as many as were able were making ready for the yearly pilgrimage. Altogether, an excellent time to waken men to the imminence of the Kingdom.

Concerning the manner of this journey, there is little said but much indicated. It was traveled with a considerable company, augmenting as they went; Jesus and the twelve, with some members of their families, and certain women, who ministered to them; Mary of Magdala, out of whom were cast seven devils; and some others. They went afoot, with perhaps a donkey or two for the slender luggage; and every mile they trod was historic holy ground. It was the custom, on approaching a village where Jesus would teach, for two or three of the disciples to go ahead and make such provision as they could for the entertainment of the Master, announcing him, and no doubt appointing a place where he could be heard. But there must have been many occasions between villages, or in those which proved inhospitable, when they camped happily in the fields or in the courtyard of the wayside khans. It appears that a first attempt was made to reach

Jerusalem by the ancient Egyptian road which ran through Samaria, past Sychar and the vale of Shechem; but the Samaritans would not receive them. At the first village, where the inhabitants proved unfriendly, the sons of Zebedee would have called down fire upon them after the manner of Elijah, so hardly had they learned the lesson that the Son of Man was come to save and not to destroy. The Samaritans, always an easy, idol-loving people, closer to Rome under the hand of the Procurator Pontius Pilate, and furthest from the national dream, pushed their indifference to the prophet to the prohibitive point, for we hear no more of Jesus having set foot in the country of Shechem. They returned instead, and approached Jerusalem from the south-east by way of the other side of Jordan.

It was in the bitterness of this rejection, no doubt, that he said to one who would have followed him, "the foxes have holes . . . but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." And to another who made excuse that he must first bury his father: "Let the dead bury their dead," since dead he found them in the spirit. So they passed to the parts of Syria beyond the Bridge, from whence, when the Bridge was broken under the heel of the Roman legionaries, the tide of Islam rolled in upon them.

This is a high, level country, with a wind always in the wheat and great oaks rustling along the ridges. In Gilead there is balm, fields of fragrant herbs, orchards of pomegranate and apricot. Moab is a land of pastures; the roadways are beaten to dust by the flocks; toward Amman herds of camels feeding. A band of pilgrims passing from city to city of the Greek league of the Decapolis would seldom be far from the sound of the shepherds' pipes and the heavy bells of the cattle as they break down the *wadis* to the drinking places. This was the land of Gad and Reuben, and, though strong in Greek influence, was still predominately Hebrew. Scarcely had the apostolic band set foot in it when they were met by Pharisees with the customary levitical quibble.

This time it was an inquiry as to whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every reason. In Jewry, the power of divorce lay in the hands of the husband, requiring scarcely more than the mere form of saying so to make it lawful. It is possible that the party of the Pharisees were honestly opposed to the abuses which had sprung up under Roman laxness; but it is also probable that they were not unwilling to set Jesus at odds with Herod, who, in the thick of his troubles between Herodias and the father of his wife, was sensitive on the subject of divorce. If he had beheaded John for his strictures, what might he not be provoked to undertake against the Man from Nazareth? Jesus, however, with his customary tact, avoided the personal issue and maintained the stand he had earlier taken of inviolable marriage, basing it not upon revelation, but inevitably on the natural mating habit of humankind, "as it was in the beginning." Here, too, is the first recognition of human expedient;

"because of the hardness of your hearts," divorce was allowed by Moses, which did not, however, render less obligatory the single, life-long relation; for, though polygamy was still to be found, it appears nowhere to have crossed his horizon nor to have entered into the problem of early Christianity. In this connection one may speak of the sole other incident which illuminates for us, in the light of the teachings of Jesus, the vexed relations of sex. This is an incident which finds its way into no canonical writing until the early part of the second century, when it was inserted in the document attributed to John, where, in spite of some exegetical difficulties, it makes good its claim to consideration. It is placed in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and, by tradition wholly unsupported but of great antiquity, connected with the person of Mary of Magdala. By those of the priestly party, who hoped to catch him tripping, there was brought to him a woman taken in adultery. But Jesus, making as though he heard them not, stooping, wrote with his finger upon the ground; and when they continued asking what should be done to her, lifted himself at last, inquiring of them the penalty. Whereupon her accusers insisted that it was lawful she should be stoned. Said Jesus, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." In this fashion he went the first mile, which they compelled him. But when at the end of the second he found himself alone with the woman, he left off writing to say: "Hath no man condemned thee?"

Said she: "No man, Lord."

Then said Jesus: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more."

Words and act, they are both of a piece with all that we know of Jesus; for was he not among the prophets and given to symbolic acts charged with more than mere words conveyed? Writing in the dust was it not to say—for we do not know if he had really learned to write at all—even so is this sin of which you accuse her written in the body, which, being dust, perishes? Whether or not the incident occurred as stated, it goes with the answer to the Pharisees to show that, though Jesus constituted chastity a matter of mind as well as body, he made no more of lapses from it than of other sins, and forgave them as readily. He put the desire of the flesh on exactly the same moral footing as the greed of money or the lust of pride, neither condemning more severely, as the church has done, nor more easily excusing, as is the way of the world.

It is doubtful, however, if the twelve grasped anything of the breadth of his comment on the existing law, allowed by Moses because of "the hardness of their hearts," for we find them moving in an orbit as narrow almost as that of his detractors, forbidding the children which were brought to him to be blessed, and still unlesened when he, taking a little child in his arms and setting him in the midst of them, declared that of such was the kingdom of heaven. In a very little while we are confronted by the spectacle of the sons of Zebedee,

at the first opportunity asking for the chief seats in heaven.

This takes us back a little to one of the earlier incidents of the Perean pilgrimage, of the young man who had kept all the law and the commandments from his youth up, and was still concerned as to how he might inherit eternal life. Said the teacher: "One thing thou lackest . . . sell whatsoever thou hast . . . take up thy cross, and follow me." But to the disciples, after the young man had gone away grieving, for he had great possessions, Jesus said: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom!"

And, says Mark, the disciples were astonished at his words.

This is more important even than the saying. They were astonished. For eight or nine months they had been with him, preaching preparation for the Kingdom; and this was the first they had heard of personal wealth as constituting a bar to entry; a serious oversight on the part of the Master, if we are to read this comment on the particular case as constituting an essential doctrine. All through the Galilean ministry not a word has been heard of it, though Luke expressly tells us that there were women of substance in his train. Later, in Jerusalem, we find him accepting the use of a room for the Passover, and a garden without the walls from those of his followers whose fortunes permitted of such lendings. It appears, however, not only from circumstances such as these, but from what immediately follows, that it was not the possession of riches which Jesus discredited, but the *attachment* to them; for he goes on to put in the same category brethren and sisters, parent or wife or children. Just as Curt had been his rejection of one who would have been his disciple, but wished first to bury his father. The stress upon wealth, as against other distractions to the spirit, is ours, not Jesus'.

Too much has been made of the incident of the rich young man, and of a later parable of Lazarus and Dives, which illustrated a popular notion—pagan as well as Hebrew—that somehow, in its turning, the wheel of life must bring to every soul the full round of experience: to the poor riches, and to the rich poverty, and to those that mourned, rejoicing. Something of this kind must have been in the mind of the disciples, for, though this seems to have been the first time that Jesus' doctrine of self-abnegation came clear to them, it set them off immediately in the direction of the logical compensation. Something of tenderness for the Master's disappointment in the rich young man—for Jesus, beholding him, had loved him—must have been in Peter's "Lo, *we* have left all, and have followed thee". But nothing could have illustrated so completely the gap which, in spite of all this intimate fellowship, lay between Jesus and his disciples, as the way in which James and John turned the promise of spiritual compensation, with which Jesus met the proffered consolation, into a hope of material advancement. It was not long before they found a naïve expression for it.

(To be continued)